

Mapping of Junior High School Students' Social Relation Problem and the Needed Assisting Model

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Abstract: This research aims to describe Junior High School students' social relation problem and the needed assisting model. This research used descriptive design with survey method. The subjects of this research were Junior High School students in the three cities in East Java. This research used purposive sampling as well. The data was collected by using questionnaire. The data analysis was conducted descriptively. This research found that Junior High School students' social relation problems included the problems of themselves, problems with the family and society. The students' social relation problems were due to the students' weak awareness of cultural diversity. The description of Junior High School students' social relation problems as well as the needed assisting model will be explained in detailed based on the results of analyzing the relevant research results.

Keywords: Social Relation Problems, Junior High School Students, Assisting Model

1. Introduction

Junior High School students are the ones who are in the teenager phase indicated by the significant changing of physical and emotional-social aspects. Such situations are not pleasing for them since they have to adapt soon to the changing of themselves as well as fulfill the expectation of society based on their age at that moment (Santrock, 2012). This condition possibly causes a drastic changing of the students' life aspects totally.

The dilemmatic conditions faced by the students in the transition period of their life cause they tend to undergo many problems – both problems of themselves and with the others. Ultimately, when the environment does not pay intensive attention to such situation, there will be many Junior High School students failed in their lives.

One of the factors causing problems among Junior High School students is cultural diversity. Indonesia is known as a country of which nation, tribe and religion are varied so the society should have the willingness to tolerate and appreciate such differences. Every individual should understand that the differences are not for opposing each other. They should, however, complement and enrich the diversity each other. In order to successfully communicate cross culturally, knowledge and understanding of cultural factors such as values, attitudes, beliefs and behavior should be acquired (Gitimu, 2010). The age of Junior High School students have the characteristics of thinking ability entering formal operational phase. Based on the cognitive ability, the students start to be aware of culture which is different from their own culture. Such awareness can possibly raise up tolerance and respect each other among the students.

The fact shows that the adults' role in modeling the tolerance attitudes and behaviors is weak. The lack of exemplary behavior that is rich in tolerance is a problem ethnocentric, is that one culture view itself as better than other culture and this hampers intercultural communication (Zaharna, 2000). Such condition is pathetic for Junior High School students in the moment of looking for their identity and requiring good model from their environment. The real act will be more effective and touching for teenagers rather than utterance since it is easy to examine and imitate directly. In fact, the environment tends only to give speech or advice without real act model. Such conditions cause the students lost of model and finally they are trapped in the less conducive social life problems.

Every human cannot be separated from culture. A culture is a product of human and humans' interaction among them creates culture. Triandis (1994) states that someone is impossible to live without culture. Currently, culture is understood widely including many variables of demography, status, and ethnography. Culture includes any human's beliefs, value-orientations influencing the habits, norms, feelings, worldview and behavior that become a lifestyle and mental concepts of individual among society (Pederson, 1991).

Talking about culture means we talk about differences reflecting every individual's uniqueness. The cultural differences often cause conflicts and social problems if they are not considered with awareness of our own culture and other' culture. An individual having cultural awareness will be able to openly appreciate and accept the differences (Oparah, 2006). Cultural diversity is a reflection of particular thinking and act style of every individual. Every individual is formed by certain group culture. In the group, an individual interacts since he/she is delivered to the world. Together with such social interaction, an individual also forms his/her own culture through his/her experiences that they interpret personally. The personal interpretation causes a person is relatively different from another person.

Sue and Sue (2003) and Locke (1992) explain that cultural group functions as a basis for people to be a true individual through the process of participating in a particular cultural group or being a member in many groups. Locke (1992) adds that any occurrences that happen in the life and how every member of any cultural groups interprets such occurrences personally will make themselves are different from other people. An important cultural identity can protect an individual from risks, primarily social problems.

Every individual is included in the society bringing background knowledge related to the background of a cultural group and it will influence someone's interaction with other people. Every individual should have background knowledge of the differences and values of culture. This knowledge will raise the cultural awareness of each person (Parfitt, 2004). The cultural awareness is an attitude in which people aware of themselves and they realize that they have different cultural background with others without judging the differences so they can appreciate and tolerate each other.

One of cultural awareness indications is understanding the importance of the others' belief and experiences (Guberman & Maheu, 2004). An individual who cares about culture will be beneficial in other culture. They will appreciate and respect the diversity and openly learn something from the others' perspectives. The final goals of cultural diversity are happiness and prosperity (Kubokawai & Ottaway, 2009).

The awareness of cultural diversity is critical to be developed as early as possible especially in the period of Junior High School. The awareness of cultural diversity can prevent from social conflict or disintegration caused by the cultural differences often happen in Indonesian society recently. Due to the more varied social life and the more complex Junior High School students' social problems, this research is aiming at getting a complete description of Junior High School students' social relation problems and needed assisting model.

2. Method

This research used a descriptive research design with survey method. The populations were the Junior High School students in East Java. The Junior High School students were chosen as the research focus based on socio psycho-pedagogic consideration. Junior High School students are categorized as early teenagers whose one of characteristics is trying to develop their own values. In this development stage, they need help from their environment to develop their life values, attitudes and behaviors positively especially related to cultural awareness.

The populations of this research were the Junior High School students in East Java. The sampling was conducted by using purposive sampling technique considering the vast amount and characteristics of the populations. The samples of this research were Junior High School students class VII and VIII in East

Java. The samples were classified then based on the area such as the central part of East Java (Malang), the West area (Madiun) and the capital city area (Surabaya). The three regions were determined to describe the condition of Junior High School students representing the areas in East Java. In every field, two schools were chosen as the research location. Every school was represented by twenty students so the total number this research subject was 120 students. This research used questionnaire to obtain the data. The data analysis was conducted descriptively in the form of percentage so the students' social relation problems could be well described.

3. Results

The social relation problems include: (1) self-problems, (2) school environment related-problems, (3) family related-problems and (4) society related-problems

3.1 Self-Problems

The identified problems were the students' self-problems including difficulty in knowing their potential and weaknesses, using their potential and accepting their weaknesses as well as negative thinking about themselves. From 120 students, most of them – 107 students (89.1%) were difficult in knowing their potential and weaknesses; 90 students (97.5%) were difficult in using their potential; 65 students (95.4%) were difficult in accepting their weaknesses and 45 students (37.5%) were negative-thinking about themselves.

3.2 School Environment Related-Problems

The identified problems related to the school environment were the difficulty in adapting to the new friends and accepting friends' opinions/ tending to be too selective in making friend; humiliating friends considered different from them due to the difference in physical size and disability. From 120 students, most of them – 100 students (92%) were difficult to accept their friends' opinion; 70 students (58,3%) tended to be too selective in making friend; 45 students (37,5%) were difficult in adapting with new friends; and 30 students (25%) have ever humiliated their friends considered different from them because of the physical size difference and disability.

3.3 Family Related-Problems

The identified problems faced by the students related to the family were; getting difficult in accepting parents' opinion, considering the adults' thoughts were inflexible, believing parents cannot understand them, tending to imposing on their own opinion when they discuss with their parents. From 120 students, most of them – 110 students (91,6%) were difficult in accepting their parents' opinion; 100 students (83,3%) considered their parents cannot understand them; 80 students (66,7%) considered their parents'

thoughts were inflexible; and 80 students (66,7%) tended to impose on their own opinion when they talk to their parents.

3.4 Society-related Problems

The identified problems faced by the students were: they opposed to the norms and regulations existing in the society, considered the society tended to restrict their freedom. From 120 students, most of them – 80 students (66,7%) opposed to the rules existing in the society; 70 students (58,3%) considered the society tended to restrict their freedom.

4. Discussion

The problems faced by Junior High School students dealing with their social relation were due to the drastic physical changing implicating on all aspects of their lives. In this phase, the students got confused with their own conditions. In this case, actually, Junior High School students need to be accompanied by the ones around them especially parents to know the changing occurred to them so that they can adapt to the changing. Not all SMP students, however, got mentoring they need so they felt the hard and complicated in facing this changing phase. The hard phase derived some problems dealing with themselves and environment.

Self-problems are the hard ones to see if they are compared to Junior High School students' problems related to the environment. They are difficult to observe since they are the internal conflicts that the students might not be aware of. The various kind of internal conflicts is actually can be minimized if everyone cares about all things happen to him/herself physically and psychologically. If everyone can realize who is he/she holistically regarding physical, psychological, potential, and weaknesses aspects, he/she will readily accept his/her condition holistically. This right self-acceptance will help an individual to recognize conditions potentially raising up problems to his/herself.

The Junior High School students' social relation to their school environment is an interesting and dynamic relation. School is one of a miniature of social environment giving the students opportunity to interact with all individuals within it with any roles. In the Junior High School students' interaction, the peers dominated and gave amazing effects to their life. They considered their friends as the mirror and model in their everyday lives. This case possibly caused conflict with not only the adults around them but also the peers. The conflicts happened due to the less awareness that social relation involved two or more individuals that were different in many ways. In other words, the sensibility of each is needed to interact well that is indicated by the minimum conflict and ultimately they can appreciate the differences among them and do not consider the differences as the problem sources.

The problem occurring among children especially Junior High School students with their parents is one of the family aspects assumed that it was related to the quality of teenagers' social function. Although the increase of conflict from child periods up to teenager periods is generally viewed as a normative, the high level of parents-teen conflict is worried to be mal-adaptive to the teen's social function. A teen will get difficult to adapt with his/her environment as the consequence of his/her inability in solving the problems with his/her parents. The conflicts often happen between teens and their parents possibly caused by the lack of awareness of the teens and their parents about the individual differences causing the different point of view, the way to think and so forth. Such lack of awareness happened since everyone did not care about culture.

The effort of encouraging the cultural awareness in the daily life has not seemingly been done effectively. The practice in the field, we can find adult people often use more instruction/demand rather than real act model and teach multi-standard. For example, parents ask the children to be polite, friendly and appreciate others' opinion; however, they show the behavior of not acknowledging the others' opinion. Such phenomenon possibly causes the children get confused with the standard applied by surround adults especially their parents. Finally, the children tend to decide to use their own rules without caring of whether they will raise a conflict with other people having a different culture from them.

Teenager period is a moment to looking for self-identity and attempt to free from parents. Therefore, teenager period is important in forming values. One of the teenager's characteristics related values are teenagers are definitely needed as a reference, guidance or role model in looking for their own way to upgrade their own identity to be more mature. The dominant characteristic in the development of teenagers' moral they start to think in abstract and can solve hypothetical problems based on the cognitive development stage starting to reach formal operational thinking order. In this stage, the teens' thought of certain problem is no longer bound with not only the time, place and situation but also moral source as their life basis.

The moral source as the basis/role model of Junior High School students is the peer. Therefore, the dispute often happens between Junior High School students and society. The students consider society and the regulation within it are too ossified and do not conform their willingness. Meanwhile, the society considers the teens especially Junior High School students as rebel and indiscipline ones. This particular dispute happens because both sides have not understood each other and cared about characteristic differences and need of each side. Both of them consider themselves as the right one so the amount of Junior High School students breaking the rules in the society and undergoing conflict with the society increases.

The Junior High School students that are not totally mature tend to show the inconsistency in behaving (Santrock, 2012). Sometimes, they can behave correctly based on the custom standard especially dealing with cultural awareness. In another time, however, they act in childish that tend to stimulate conflict with their peers even adult people. The conflict sometimes should be solved through the legal constitution. If such phenomena happen persistently, the favorable situation for the students' optimal development and growth is difficult to reach.

The conflicts happened among the students of Junior High School could basically be prevented so far. The conflicts occurred because of the wrong perception of the diversity that exists both within itself and the environment and the minimum model from the environment (Winkel, 2004). Such wrong perception could be changed through giving or revising information. Such solution is expected useful in changing the students' perspective and behavior. That is why, there should be planned and systematical changing through effective assisting for Junior High School students.

The assisting needed by the students considering the social relation is multicultural education and training. Someone who has multicultural knowledge and skills means he/she has realized him/herself and will use his/her knowledge, understanding, consideration and respect when he/she interacts with other individuals or groups (Foronda, 2008). If an individual has multicultural knowledge and skills, he/she will be able to communicate and enjoyable interact with other people effectively.

One of effective assisting for Junior High School students related to social relation is through training of cultural awareness. This particular assisting model is suitable since training has specific and measurable goals as well as complete planning and strategy in which give the students opportunity to directly undergo and interact with any cultures. This strategy is chosen since to have undergo cultural awareness, someone should interact with other people having different culture (Akiba & Miller, 2004; Chan et al., 2003; Lasch, 2000). The multicultural education and training given to the students gives the significant results to the development of Junior High School students' cultural awareness. Penn & Post (2012) found that multicultural education and training affects self reported multicultural knowledge and skill. Other than that, increased multicultural training is a significant predictor of increased multicultural competence (Johnson & Jackson Williams, 2014). The training model that should be developed is a complete manual including material of cultural diversity, training guide for counselor and Junior High School students. It is expected that this assisting model that will be developed can help to reduce the potential of social conflict among Junior High School students.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

The conclusions of this research results are as follow: 1) the Junior High School students' social relation problems are due to the weak ability of awareness of cultural diversity. 2) the awareness of cultural diversity is important to have in the daily life to prevent horizontal conflict, 3) there should be an assisting model developed in the form of training guide of awareness of cultural diversity based on the characteristics of the development age of Junior High School students.

5.2 Recommendation

The recommendation proposed through this research were: 1) an assisting model should be developed in the form of multicultural education and training for Junior High School students, 2) A school should facilitate the effort to develop awareness of cultural diversity of Junior High School students by creating cultural friendly school environment so the students can show their qualified personal capacity so the potential of conflict among the students can be minimized, 3) A counselor should develop guidance and counseling program facilitating the increasing of Junior High School students' awareness of cultural diversity.

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